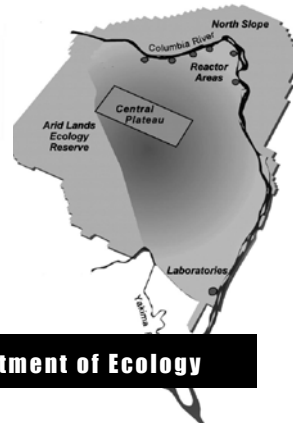




# Hanford Update



U.S. Department of Energy • U.S. Environmental Protection Agency • Washington State Department of Ecology

SPRING EDITION 2005

## Fourth Annual “State of the Hanford Site” Meetings Planned



The Tri-Party Agencies (U.S. Department of Energy, Environmental Protection Agency, and Washington State Department of Ecology) invite you to join them for the fourth annual series of “State of the Hanford Site” meetings.

Decision-makers from each of the agencies and the Hanford Advisory Board will be on hand to talk about recent accomplishments and upcoming challenges in the Hanford cleanup effort. This year, the meetings will be held in conjunction with Hanford Advisory Board meetings.

*The meetings are scheduled for:*

**June 15** – Red Lion Hanford House, Richland WA

**September 7** - Double Tree Hotel Lloyd Center, Portland, OR

**November** TBD - TBD Seattle, WA

For more information, or for directions to specific locations, please contact the Hanford Cleanup Line, 800-321-2008, or visit the following website:

<http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/nwp/calendar/caldetail.htm#sos>



## Hanford Hotline ▶ 1-800-321-2008

Call the Hanford Hotline for more information on these topics,  
and other Hanford cleanup issues and activities

### Public Comment Periods



**5/6/05 – 6/20/05**

Integrated Disposal Facility  
(IDF) permit and State  
Environmental Policy  
Act (SEPA) decision

**5/16/05 – 6/30/05**

Proposed Plan for the  
U Plant Area Soil  
Waste Sites  
(200-UW-1 Operable Unit)

**6/20/05 – 7/20/05**

Time-Critical Removal Action  
to Dispose of Retrieved  
Waste from a Hanford  
Burial Ground

### IN THIS ISSUE...

- Cleanup U Plant Area Waste Sites
- Ecology Outreach Efforts
- ERC Team Accelerated Work in 300 Area

# News and Updates

## Public Comment Period on Document to Cleanup U Plant Area Waste Sites

The Tri-Party Agencies are seeking feedback from the public on a document (200-UW-1 Operable Unit Proposed Plan) that describes the alternatives that were evaluated for the cleanup of 31 waste sites in the U Plant Area. This document also identifies the recommended cleanup alternative for each.

Thirty soil waste sites and one Resource Conservation and Recovery Act treatment, storage and/or disposal (TSD) unit (216-U-12) make up the 200-UW-1 OU. These waste sites are primarily contaminated with cesium-137, technetium-99, uranium, and/or nitrate-constituents that pose a potential risk to human health and the environment. These sites include structures (e.g., cribs), debris (e.g., timbers) and/or soils that range from small (surface area of contamination 30 ft<sup>2</sup> and 3 ft deep) to very large (surface area of contamination 50,000 ft<sup>2</sup> and 200 ft deep).

The Proposed Plan summarizes four clean-up alternatives that were analyzed and evaluated. The alternatives are: 1) No Action, 2) Maintain Existing

Soil Cover, Institutional Controls, and Monitored Natural Attenuation, 3) Remove, Treat, and Dispose and 4) Engineered Barrier.

Preferred alternatives were selected by applying the 9 Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act criteria. Remove, Treat and Dispose was identified as the preferred alternative for 15 sites. Maintain Existing Soil Cover, Institutional Controls, and Monitored Natural Attenuation was identified as the preferred alternative for 9 sites. Engineered Barrier was the preferred alternative for 5 sites and No Action was recommended as the preferred alternative for 2 sites.

A 45-day public comment period runs from May 16 thru June 30, 2005. A copy of the Proposed Plan can be obtained by calling the Hanford Cleanup Line 1-800-321-2008 or viewed online at <http://www.hanford.gov/public/calendar/> under the Public Comment Period Section. Written comments should be submitted by June 30, 2005 to:

**Mr. John Price**

Washington State Department of Ecology  
3100 Port of Benton Blvd.  
Richland, WA 99354-1670  
Fax: (509) 372-7971 email: [jpri461@ecy.wa.gov](mailto:jpri461@ecy.wa.gov)

## Notice of Class 1 Permit Modification

The Department of Energy transmitted Class 1 modifications to the Hanford Facility Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) Permit for quarter ending March 31, 2005, to the Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology). Pursuant to WAC 173-303-830(4)(a)(i)(B), the Permittees of the Hanford Facility RCRA Permit are providing notice. Hanford

Facility RCRA Permit Condition I.C.3, allows for quarterly notification of Class 1 modifications to be made to Ecology. Class 1 modifications are made quarterly. Other Class 1 modifications can be made as necessary depending on the circumstances. For additional information about the Class 1 modifications, contact Greta Davis, Ecology, (509) 372-7894.

# News and Updates

## USDOE and Ecology Agree on a Collaborative Approach to Cleaning Up Non-Radioactive and Radioactive Landfills

In March, the U.S. Department of Energy (USDOE) and the Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology) concluded a collaborative process to develop a cleanup approach for two areas (200-SW-1 and 200-SW-2 Operable Units). An operable unit is a group of similar waste sites that probably can be cleaned up in a similar manner.

In December Ecology received from USDOE a draft Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act remedial investigation/feasibility study (RI/FS) work plan for these two operable units. The work plan identifies how data will be collected and evaluated. The data are used to recommend a preferred method for cleanup of the waste sites. Ecology cited substantial differences in the two agencies'

understanding of the scope of this work plan. Both agencies agreed to participate in collaborative discussions about the work plan. The result was an agreement on the scope of the work plan. That Agreement can be viewed at <http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/nwp/pdf/200sw1asw2.pdf>

The 200-SW-1 operable unit includes non-radioactive landfills and dumps. These sites received miscellaneous non-radioactive solid waste, e.g., power plant fly ash, unused laboratory and plant chemicals, and construction debris. The 200-SW-2 operable unit includes 22 sites where radioactive wastes were disposed to unlined (historically) or lined engineered trenches, from 1944 to the present.

## Ecology Outreach Efforts

The Washington State Department of Ecology's Nuclear Waste Program was very active this spring supporting science instruction in elementary, middle, and high school classrooms. Using tools like the groundwater three-dimensional model, Ginger Wireman, an Environmental Education and Outreach Specialist for Ecology, worked with more than 1000 students, teaching them about contaminant fate and transport in the groundwater. "This model is a great tool to help people of all ages understand groundwater movement, and can easily be connected to Hanford cleanup issues," Wireman said. "Teachers sometimes have difficulty finding local examples to include in their assigned science curriculum so I'm glad we can supplement their teaching content."

Large field events like the Salmon-In-The-Classroom release events for Benton and Franklin County schools exposed about 2400 kids to new science concepts, or reinforced learned ones. These hands-on experiences have an added bonus of reaching parent chaperones and volunteers. "I'm always surprised at the number of



parents who come to me after a presentation to say that it really helped them understand the challenges faced in cleaning up Hanford." Cynthia Smith-Kuebel of Wahluke Intermediate School agreed. "The parents and teachers said this year's event was much better than before because of the science stations" said the Mattawa

# News and Updates

fourth-grade teacher after their annual visit to the White Bluffs.

In addition, Wireman has demonstrated water quality monitoring equipment and explained how employees at Hanford and the Washington State Dept. of Health continually monitor surface waters like the Columbia River to determine any effects from Hanford. Showing kids how to test simple parameters such as pH, dissolved oxygen and nitrates can give them an idea of some

activities scientists and technicians at Hanford might do to protect the environment and public health.

For more information about scheduling Ms. Wireman to visit a classroom or speak at service organizations, please contact her at (509)372-7935, or email [gwir461@ecy.wa.gov](mailto:gwir461@ecy.wa.gov) or visit <http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/nwp/> and click on the Kids link.

## Environmental Restoration Contract Team Accelerates Work in 300 Area



As of mid-May, demolition of the 313 Metal Fabrication Building in the 300 Area was nearly 50 percent complete.

“DOE transferred 21 buildings to the Bechtel-led Environmental Restoration Project for accelerated closure,” said Mike Mihalic, the Bechtel task lead for the 300 Area work. The structures range from a large fuel fabrication facility to storage buildings and laboratories.

Work began in 1999 to expedite cleanup and reduce costs by integrating facility demolition with river corridor cleanup. The goal was to be able to release some of the remediated 300 Area by 2009 instead of 2046 as previously planned.

Demolition of the 313 Building began in March and is the first of the facilities to be demolished. The 77,000-square-foot high-bay facility was used to machine and assemble uranium fuel rods for Hanford’s plutonium production reactors from the 1950s to 1986. “One of the critical tasks we completed before beginning demolition was to conduct an industrial health baseline survey,” Mihalic said. The survey provided data on radioactive contamination and other hazardous materials that were in the building.

“From historical records, we know that the facility had been contaminated with beryllium during the fuel fabrication process,” he said. Beryllium is a naturally occurring metal used in metalworking, electronics, laboratory work and other industries. Beryllium disease can occur when people who have a beryllium sensitivity inhale beryllium dust or fumes. It primarily affects the lungs.

“The baseline survey told us where beryllium was a concern so we could protect workers and the environment during demolition,” said Mihalic. He added that all team members have taken special training to learn how to work safely around beryllium.

Mihalic added that workers are characterizing the 314 Building now in preparation for its demolition later in 2005. “We also may be able to demolish several other small buildings if supplemental funding becomes available,” he said. These buildings were used for storage and sewer monitoring.



# News and Updates

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## New Ecology Lead for Public Involvement

Tim Hill has accepted a promotion to lead the Nuclear Waste Program's Public Involvement efforts for the Washington State Department of Ecology. As the lead for the Public Involvement team, he will supervise a staff of three and report directly to the Program Administration Section Manager on all issues related to public involvement, education and community outreach, stakeholder relations, and internal and external communications. Hill has been an integral part of NWP's Public Involvement Team -- leading public involvement efforts for permitting activities, creating an electronic presence for the Nuclear Waste Program, and

representing Ecology on various Hanford Advisory Board committees. He also brings background and experience from the Office of the Secretary of State and other legislative activities prior to his tenure at Ecology. "I, personally, have grown to rely on Tim's sound judgment and counsel regarding public involvement," said Nolan Curtis, Ecology's Program Administration Section Manager. "We look forward to his increased presence and influence in Ecology's Nuclear Waste Program Public Involvement policy development and operations management."

## Hanford's Integrated Disposal Facility – Draft Permit

The Washington State Department of Ecology is requesting your feedback on a draft Hazardous Waste Permit for the U.S. Department's of Energy's Integrated Disposal Facility to be located at the Hanford Site. The draft permit will cover vitrified mixed waste disposal operations at the site.

Mixed waste is waste that has both radioactive and dangerous waste components. Vitrified waste is waste that is enclosed in glass by means of a process called vitrification. The mixed waste will be vitrified at the Hanford Site's Waste Treatment Plant and Bulk Vitrification Test and Demonstration Facility.

The goal for the Integrated Disposal Facility permit is to provide a well designed, well constructed facility that is operated in a manner that will result in no or minimal impact to the human health and the environment.

A 45-day public comment period for the draft permit and the State Environmental Policy Act decision will run from May 6, 2005 to June 20, 2005. A public hearing will be held if there is significant public interest in holding one. To request a public hearing, please contact Tim Hill, Nuclear Waste Program, 3100 Port of Benton Blvd., Richland, WA 99354. You can also contact Tim via e-mail at [tihi461@ecy.wa.gov](mailto:tihi461@ecy.wa.gov).

All comments received during the public comment period will be considered and responded to when Ecology issues the final permit decision. Copies of the draft period and the State Environmental Policy Act decision are available for review at the Nuclear Waste Program web site

(<http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/nwp/>).

Please send written comments to:

**Suzanne Dahl** (Draft Permit)  
Department of Ecology  
Nuclear Waste Program  
3100 Port of Benton Blvd.  
Richland, WA 99352  
**Fax:** (509) 372-7971  
**Email:** [sdah461@ecy.wa.gov](mailto:sdah461@ecy.wa.gov)

All comments received during the public comment period will be considered and responded to before Ecology issues the final permit on whether to approve modification to this portion of the permit.

## A Progress Report

# *FROM THE HANFORD ADVISORY BOARD*

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By Todd Martin

*Chair, Hanford Advisory Board*

The Hanford Advisory Board was established ten years ago to provide advice to the Tri-Party Agreement (TPA) agencies on Hanford cleanup and waste management. The Board includes representatives of local and regional government, Native American tribes, business interests, workers, the State of Oregon, environmental organizations, agencies, public interest groups, and the public-at-large. Todd Martin, representing Citizens for a Clean Eastern Washington, chairs the Board. Susan Leckband, Non-union Non-Management employee representative, and Shelley Cimon, public-at-large, serve as co-vice chairs for the board. Principles adopted by the Board have helped to form a Northwest stakeholder vision of what the Hanford Site should be like in the future.

The Hanford Advisory Board recognizes that much clean up work on the Hanford Site has been completed. One of the most difficult jobs is yet to be completed however—decision-making for waste sites in the Central Plateau. These waste sites present some of Hanford's foremost challenges in terms of technology, logistics, regulatory implications, risk and worker safety.

The Board has spent much of 2005 working on a flow diagram to guide decision-making in the Central Plateau. Based on extensive discussions in Board meetings, workshops and committee meetings, the Board finalized the flow diagram at its May meeting (it is available at [www.hanford.gov/public/boards/hab](http://www.hanford.gov/public/boards/hab)). In a nutshell, the flow diagram outlines the Board's preference for permanent solutions to Central Plateau cleanup challenges—solutions that involve retrieval, treatment and disposal of the waste. Acknowledging that all waste sites will not be amenable to retrieval, treatment and disposal, the flow diagram presents a process for determining whether a physical barrier (or 'cap') over the waste site should be considered.

The Board has generated a body of well thought-out work over the years in advising the Tri Party Agencies. Some HAB members are subject experts who use their considerable technical skills to evaluate documents generated to support cleanup and remediation decisions. Additionally, other members of the HAB are well versed in the policy implications associated with the various remediation choices. The Central Plateau Remedial Action Values Flow diagram is just the latest example of the collaborative effort that the HAB engages in to provide information and advice to the Tri-Party Agencies.

### **HOW CAN YOU BE INVOLVED?**

*The next meeting of the Board will be June 16 & 17th in Richland, WA. Public comment periods are provided during each day of the meeting. The Board encourages the public to attend its meetings and would like to hear from you about the issues and concerns you have about cleanup at Hanford. For more specific information on the Board meeting, please contact Sharon Braswell at 509-376-8503*

### **TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE HAB:**

### **SEND COMMENTS TO:**

Todd Martin  
Hanford Advisory Board  
c/o Tammie Holm,  
EnviroIssues  
713 Jadwin Avenue, Suite 4  
Richland, Washington 99352  
Telephone: 509-942-1906

*4th Annual*

# "State of the Hanford Site"

## *Public Meeting*



**Who?** United States Department of Energy  
United States Environmental Protection Agency  
Washington State Department of Ecology  
(the Tri-Party Agencies)

**What?** A discussion among Agency Officials, Hanford Advisory Board representative, and you – the public.

**When?** Wednesday, June 15, 2005 -- 6:30 p.m.

**Where?** The Red Lion Hanford House  
802 George Washington Way, Richland

**Why?** Get the latest news on Hanford cleanup.  
Discuss budget priorities. Learn about cleanup goals and challenges for the upcoming year. Get more involved in Hanford Cleanup decisions and outcomes.

*The Hanford State of the Site Meetings are being held the Wednesday evening prior to the Hanford Advisory Board Meetings in Tri-Cities, Portland and Seattle. The Hanford Advisory Board will be meeting June 16th and 17th at the Red Lion Hanford House in Richland.*

Call the Hanford Hotline toll-free at (800) 321-2008 for more information



# Hanford Happenings & Public Meetings

- 6/15/2005 **Fourth Annual Hanford State of the Site Meeting**  
**Location:** Red Lion Hanford House, 802 George Washington Way, Richland, WA.  
**Date/Time:** 6:30 p.m. – 9:00 p.m. **Open to the Public**  
**For more information:** Erik Olds; [Theodore E Erik Olds@orp.doe.gov](mailto:Theodore_E_Erik_Olds@orp.doe.gov); 509-372-8656
- 6/16-17/2005 **Hanford Advisory Board Meeting**  
**Location:** Red Lion, Hanford House, 802 George Washington Way, Richland, WA.  
**Date/Time:** June 16: 9:00 – 5:00; June 17: 8:30 – 3:30 **Open to the Public**  
**For more information:** Erik Olds; [Theodore E Erik Olds@orp.doe.gov](mailto:Theodore_E_Erik_Olds@orp.doe.gov); 509-372-8656
- 9/7/2005 **Fourth Annual Hanford State of the Site Meeting**  
**Location:** Double Tree Hotel Lloyd Center, 1000 NE Multnomah, Portland, OR.  
**Date/Time:** 7:00 p.m. – 9:30 p.m. **Open to the Public**  
**For more information:** Steve Chalk; [Steve E Chalk@rl.gov](mailto:Steve_E_Chalk@rl.gov); 509-372-8589
- 9/8-9/2005 **Hanford Advisory Board Meeting**  
**Location:** Double Tree Hotel Lloyd Center, 1000 NE Multnomah, Portland, OR.  
**Date/Time:** September 8: 9:00 – 5:00; September 9: 8:30 – 3:30 **Open to the Public**  
**For more information:** Erik Olds; [Theodore E Erik Olds@orp.doe.gov](mailto:Theodore_E_Erik_Olds@orp.doe.gov); 509-372-8656
- 11/TBD/2005 **Fourth Annual Hanford State of the Site Meeting**  
**Location:** TBD, Seattle, WA.  
**Time:** 7:00 p.m. – 9:30 p.m. **Open to the Public**  
**For more information:** Tim Hill; [tihi461@ecy.wa.gov](mailto:tihi461@ecy.wa.gov); 509-372-7908

U.S. Department of Energy P.O. Box 550; MSIN A7-75 Richland, WA 99352
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